

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SALEM DISTRICT OFFICE
TILLAMOOK RESOURCE AREA
COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

A. Background

Project: Pisgah Progeny Salvage **Date:** 9/16/2008

Categorical Exclusion Number: OR-086-08-07CX

Location: T. 4N, R. 2W, section 31 (SESW)

Land Use Allocation(s): Matrix

B. Description of Proposed Action

The proposed action is to salvage harvest approximately 5.5 acres of approximately 80-year-old timber that was blown down during winter storms in 2006 and 2007. The project area is in T.4N, R.2E, section 31, about five miles east of Scappoose, Oregon. The trees to be salvaged are located within a stand of timber that was commercially thinned in 2003 via the Pisgah Progeny timber sale. The project area contains about 50 dead and down Douglas-fir, western hemlock and western red cedar trees. Approximately 30 trees would be harvested using ground-based equipment operating from approved skid trails and existing rocked roads. The remainder of the dead and down trees would be left on site for coarse woody debris. The harvest is expected to occur during the fall of 2008, prior to the beginning of winter storms. Harvest activities are expected to take two to three days to complete. No road construction or improvement would be required. This action is in conformance with the categorical exclusion defined under Department of Interior Manual 516 DM 11, 11.5 C (8), which allows for "Salvaging dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 miles of temporary road construction". This action is in conformance with the requirements of this categorical exclusion for the following reasons: (1) no more than five live trees would be removed for landings, skid trails, and road clearing, and (2) no temporary roads will be constructed.

Design Features:

Timber Harvest

Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in the Salem ROD/RMP would be implemented for the timber harvest operation.

Soil and Water Quality Protection

Harvest would take place during dry soil conditions.

Equipment would be restricted to existing roads and skid trails. Any skid trails used would be waterbarred and blocked to motor vehicles after logging is completed.

Wildlife Habitat

No standing trees potentially suitable as spotted owl or marbled murrelet nest trees would be impacted. Requirements for the maintenance of coarse woody debris in sufficient quantities to comply with the Standards and Guidelines of the NFP and Salem ROD/RMP (ROD/RMP pg 21) would be met.

Invasive and Nonnative Plants

Prior to entering the sale area, any heavy machinery (with the exception of log trucks and pick-up trucks used for daily personnel travel) would have all dirt and adhering vegetation removed by power-washing.

C. Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the *Salem District Record of Decision and Resource & Management Plan* (ROD/RMP), dated May 1995, because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

- *Provide a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products* (ROD/RMP page 46).
- *Provide for salvage harvest of timber killed or damaged by events such as wildfire, windstorms, insects, or disease, consistent with management objectives for other resources* (ROD/RMP page 46).

D. Compliance with NEPA

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11, 11.5, **C (8)**, which allows for **“Salvaging dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 mile of temporary road construction.”**

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment as documented in the following table. The proposed action is reviewed below, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety		X
Rationale: All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed salvage harvest is in a remote, forested location outside of population centers.		
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
Rationale: Trees to be harvested are only within the proposed timber sale unit; this unit is, by design, outside of unique areas such as those discussed above. No tree felling will occur in parks, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands. Salvage logging no more than 30 dead and down trees would not change the overall habitat function of the stand or remove habitat at the species level; as such, the proposed action would not have significant impacts on migratory birds.		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: Based on past experience, environmental effects of salvage logging a small number of trees are not highly controversial. The ROD/RMP establishes the land use allocation and goals for the affected lands; as such, there are no unresolved conflicts regarding other uses of these resources.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: Past experience from this type of activity has shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The BLM has conducted salvage logging throughout the Salem District for years. There is no evidence that logging a small number of dead and down trees has potentially significant environmental effects. Salvage logging is addressed and authorized under the Salem ROD/RMP, and as such this project represents the implementation of that land use plan decision, not a decision in principle about future actions.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The proposed project has no direct relationship to other current or planned projects in the watershed. Salvage logging will not affect the existing forest canopy in the project area, it will not alter the forest age class distribution of BLM lands in the watershed, nor will it affect stream flows in the watershed by creating extensive openings in the forest canopy. The closest stream is over 300 feet from the project area, and the potential for sediment movement into streams is extremely small. Harvesting during the dry season and using rocked and paved roads for log haul will essentially eliminate the potential for sediment transport from roads.		

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	Yes	No
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
Rationale: Surveys conducted by the BLM have not identified any cultural or historical resources that would be affected by the proposed salvage project.		
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: The proposed harvest activity is over 300 ft. from the nearest stream, and all haul is on paved or gravel-surfaced ridgetop roads. There will be no effects to water quality or fish habitat from the harvest or log haul activities. The proposed action will have no effect on Lower Columbia steelhead, chinook or coho, all listed as threatened under the ESA.		
Although the project is not expected to be implemented during the spotted owl breeding period, there is potential for disturbance impacts to spotted owls as a result of activities that generate noise above the ambient level if the project should be implemented during the breeding season (March 1 - September 30) as unsurveyed suitable habitat is within 0.25 miles of trees to be harvested. Given the pre-salvage functionality of the habitat within the treatment area (<i>i.e.</i> , most of the trees are lying on the ground), and the requirements for the maintenance of coarse woody debris in sufficient quantities to comply with the Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP), it is unlikely that down salvage would result in adverse affects to northern spotted owls during the near term or in the future. Consequently, the proposed action <i>may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect</i> , northern spotted owls. Based on the nature of the proposed action and the habitats to be affected, no impacts to the marbled murrelet would be anticipated. Consultation with US Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. Compliance with the Endangered Species Act includes the incorporation of applicable Design Standards and/or Terms and Conditions, as necessary.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal, State, local and tribal laws.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: No potential impacts have been identified by the BLM internally or through public involvement indicating that salvage logging would have an impact on low income or minority populations in Columbia County.		
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
Rationale: There are no identified sacred sites in the project area.		
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X


THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	Yes	No
Rationale: The proposed action requires that logging equipment be washed to remove dirt and vegetative material before entering the project area. This will reduce the risk of introducing or spreading and noxious weeds or non-native species in the project area. The proposed action does not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found.		

E. Interdisciplinary Team Review:

Affected Resource	Specialist	Initial	Date
Botany	Kurt Heckerroth	<i>KH</i>	9-16-08
Recreation	Debra Drake	<i>DD</i>	9-16-08
Fisheries	Matt Walker	<i>MJW</i>	9-15-08
Hydrology, Water Quality	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	9-16-08
Soils	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	9-16-08
Other Resources/ NEPA	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	9-16-08
Wildlife	Steve Bahe	<i>SB</i>	9-15-08

F. Signature

Authorized Official:



for Brad Keller, Field Manager

 Tillamook Resource Area
 Salem District

Date:

9/16/08**G. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX Review, contact Bob McDonald, NEPA Coordinator, Tillamook Resource Area, 4610 Third Street, Tillamook, OR 97141, (503) 815-1110.

H. Administrative Remedy

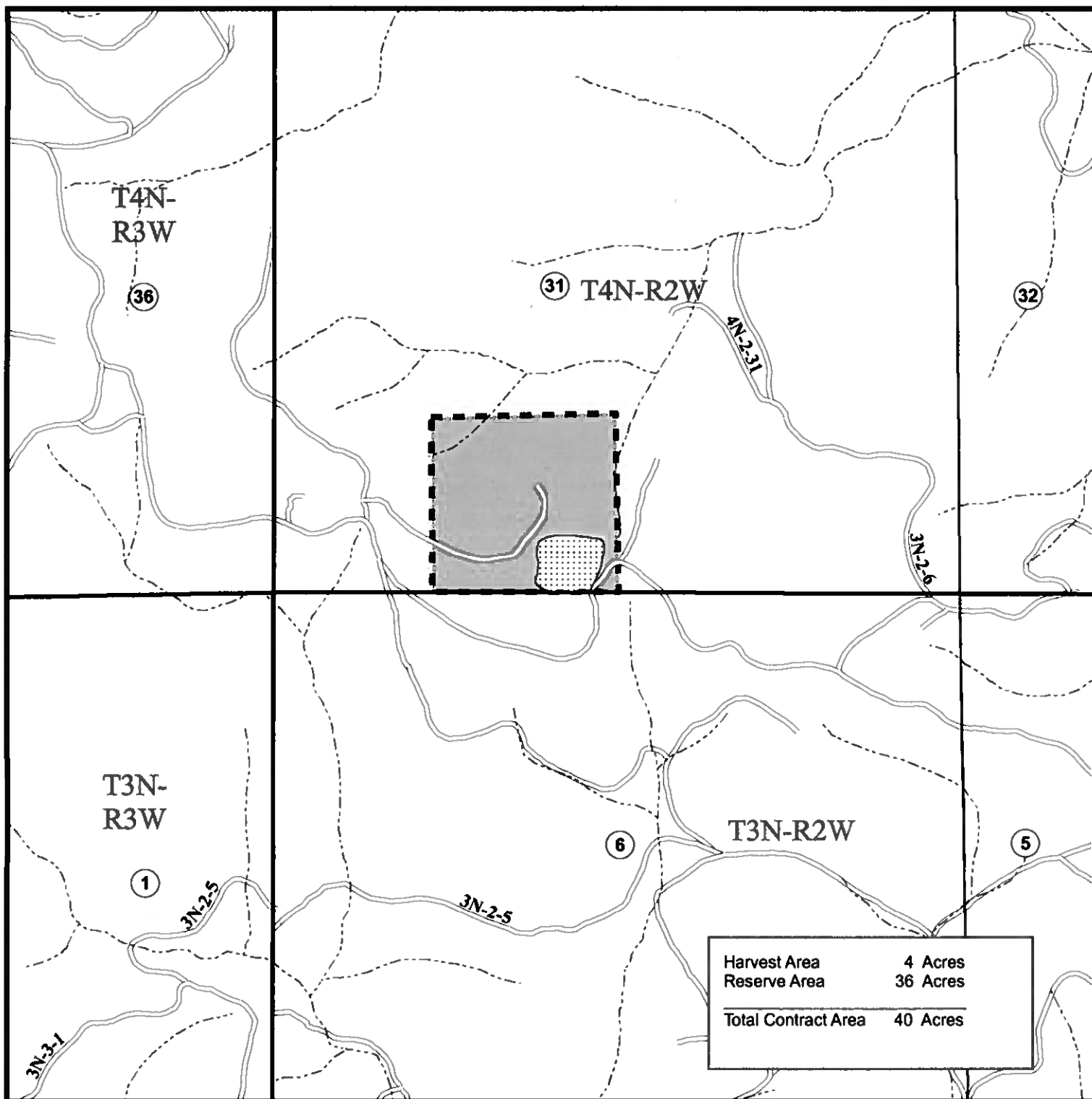
Notice of the forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the Salem District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR section 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Pisgah Progeny Salvage

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Exhibit A
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T. 4N, R. 2W, Section 31W. M. - SALEM DISTRICT - OREGON



1 inch equals 1,000 feet

